

mate with them I was always treated courteously. For my canoe they offered more paddlers than I needed. I used to leave my trunks open when I temporarily left the house where I was a guest, the baggage containing articles coveted by the Indians. They would rummage through my gear to the very bottom and knew better than I what each piece contained, but during all this long period of living among them, they robbed me of—two cigarettes! This was the experience likewise of the botanist Ricardo Fróes, who, as has been said, also lived among them in various localities for several months in 1941. 123 181

There are, therefore, certain persons toward whom the Tukuna feel a moral obligation, but for this they must be convinced that the person with whom they are dealing is incapable of lying to them or exploiting them, a conviction which presupposes, on the part of the strangers, a frank and friendly attitude toward the native culture. 609 ●

However, with their own tribesmen they do not always consider similar conduct absolutely obligatory, so that one finds examples of notorious hostility, ill will, and even dishonesty. The Tukuna were exemplary in their honesty with Ricardo Fróes and myself, but I was present once at a feast when an Indian ripped open with his knife another man's sack of clothes, deliberately stealing them; and there are other confirmed thefts from houses during the Indian owners' absence. 578 123 181 (674)

Actually, under normal conditions the Tukuna are calm and pacific, but some of them become insolent and dangerous when drunk. Frequently, at their drinking bouts at least one major quarrel occurs, and often there are injuries and fatalities. At first I took these scenes only for the end products of old hatreds and resentments, thinking that all these offenses and crimes had some serious motive, more or less unknown, which the Indians concealed. But I was finally convinced that this was not so. The Indians describe these affairs without constraint and in detail, but when one inquires the reason for the disorder, "They fight because they want to" is the only explanation that one obtains, or "So-and-so always fights when he is drunk"; the event is thus sufficiently explained. (273)

Strangely enough, a quarrel of this sort never broke out in my presence, though I attended a good number of their drinking bouts. On one occasion an Indian armed himself with a machete to attack another, but my fixing my eyes upon him with the natural interest that the situation deserved was enough to make him pass the weapon to the other and draw off. Accordingly, I believe that if at these affairs a person were present who exercised some moral authority, all such quarrels could be nipped in the bud. The trouble is, that among all these Tukuna there is apparently no one whose authority they will recognize. Their individualism, concretely expressed in their habit of living in isolated houses, and in the absence of any bond except the blood tie, will not tolerate the intervention of a chief in their outbursts of anger or in their personal problems. (692) (261)

I know of no other tribe in which one may observe such sudden transports of fury and examples of lack of self-control as occur now and then among the Tukuna. From childhood they differ from other Indians in this respect. They quarrel like civilized children, and in their houses I have heard almost as much bellowing from enraged youngsters as in Neobrazilian homes. I have observed little brothers, in childish pranks, chasing each other with a machete or a firebrand. One day a little 578 156 181 683

Nimuendajú: *The Tukuna*

61

616 Only one of my informants ever told me a version of the legend of man's creation,
773 attributing the institution of moieties to the culture hero, dyoi'.

A great number of these people who were first fished for by dyoi' and e'pi were then thrown together helter-skelter, but dyoi' separated his to the east and those of e'pi to the west. [The episode of the institution of clans (see p. 129) follows.] Afterward, he made some marry others.

616 This version, however, is in accordance with the association of the two culture
773 heroes, as well as the moieties, with the east and west, respectively. For moiety A
881 the position of children and of girls at rites of passage, when prescribed, is always
with the face to the east, and the girl's seclusion hut in the puberty ceremony is
always placed—at least it was formerly—at the east wall of the house. Moiety B
is oriented in the opposite direction. Thus, the men created by dyoi' and e'pi would
be those of moieties B and A (sic) respectively,* but though men of both moieties
deal with ta-na'ti ("Our Father"), I never found the slightest indication that some
consider themselves the descendants of dyoi' and others those of e'pi, the former
being always glorified to the disparagement of the latter.

616 In the puberty ceremony there are some significant differences between the two
881 moieties. Thus, the turtleshell drum, pa:'vi, is used exclusively by clans of moiety
A, whereas the stamping tubes, ba:'ma, and the bamboo horns, ka'iri, belong to
clans of moiety B. Lately, the stamping tube has been introduced into the ritual
of the Japú and Maguary clans of moiety B, a practice which two of my informants
held to be an unwarranted innovation.

EXOGAMY

582 The tenacity with which the Tukuna respect their laws of exogamy even today.
835 their implacable liquidation of the transgressor, and the complete incomprehension
609 of this by the Neobrazilians, even the priests, are the most serious obstacles to frank
promiscuity with the Neobrazilian population, and by preventing such promiscuity
they efficiently contribute to the preservation of the tribe. The Tukuna regard the
civilizados, among whom incest is not uncommon, with a certain contempt, not only
because of Indian prejudice but also because the Brazilian law forbids incest, even
though they attach no great importance to the law itself. A priest who eventually
gives dispensation for the marriage of a man with the daughter of the man's own
brother loses the Indians' respect, though a man's marriage with the daughter of
his sister is a different matter.

835 Incest, va:'ma'ei, includes not only carnal union between individuals of the same
773 moiety, but any disrespect shown the sex of a person in the prohibited degree of
kinship, such as a simple, involuntary glance at the genitals. According to legend,
the first person guilty of incest was e'pi, brother of the culture hero dyoi'. Desiring
to take by force half of a royal hawk that his sister mova'ca had concealed between
her knees, he touched her genitals. She was immediately transformed into a col-
lered peccary (*taitefú*), but the demon ma'ëi' of the jaguar race killed her with

* There is a discrepancy here. According to the legend given above, dyoi's people (moiety A) are oriented to the east, e'pi's (moiety B) to the west.—Trans.

* Another discrepancy! The ba:'ma belongs to moiety B but is also a recent introduction.—Trans.

* "Confused flesh": va:, a jumble of wood fibers entangled with a cipó or liana; an: ma'ei, flesh.

nora'ne continued to have visions from time to time, almost exclusively of the feasts which ta-na'tj and his companions celebrated at Igarapé ō'varē, which were apparently carried out in the fashion of rich *civilizados*, with roasted oxen to eat, and so on. In his visions he also encountered me several times, since I was among ta-na'tj's companions. Since I always treated nora'ne kindly, giving him several small presents, he grew greatly attached to me and was unable to conceal his delight in my company, embracing me and following me about wherever I might go. nora'ne spoke not a word of Portuguese; he told his revelations preferably to several women and girls related to him, from whom I in turn heard them. 792 668 787 [123]

THE TUKUNA RELIGION AND THE NEOBRAZILIANS

The Indians will give absolutely no explanation of their religion to the Neobrazilians, especially to the priests. To satisfy importunate interrogators they usually affirm belief in "tupana" (l.g. for "god" or "saint") and fear of the "yurupari" (l.g. for "devil"), but they reveal nothing about dyai' or ta-ō' or about their animistic beliefs. References in the literature, from Ribeiro de Sampaio in 1884 to Tessmann, are proof of this: there is always apparent the pretense of a belief in Christianity without any basis in fact. The Capuchin missionary Frei Fidelis has for several years been making praiseworthy efforts to learn something of the native religion. Until 1941, at least, he had learned nothing—nor had the Tukuna learned anything from him. They treat him well; they like him for his simple and affable ways but are secretly convinced, in spite of everything, that he can be only an enemy of their religious traditions; hence they continue to pull his leg with yarns of tupa'na and the yurupari'. 771 609 [114]

To illustrate the extent of Tukuna pretense of Christianity I might mention only that, at a puberty ceremony, I saw on a masquerader, and afterward acquired, a mask of tāj that sported the miter, cross, and reddish beard (imitated by hair of a squirrel's tail) of the prelate of São Paulo de Olivença. I also saw another demon masquerader who brandished as a dance staff a cross that could have come only from some Christian grave. 771 177 292

222 mock. On parting we gave the man some fish-hooks and the woman a pair of scissors which had been notched by long use. This liberality procured from the pair a torrent of thanks from the depths of their throats, besides a present of part of the bananas they had gathered.

609 We stopped successively at several Ticuna huts, where, without other payment than a trifle gracefully presented to the proprietors, we ate, drank, slept, and collected 574 musical pipes, drums, necklaces, bracelets, coronets, pompons, crests, and other baubles representing the wealth of the country, of which a Parisian bourgeois would have envied us the possession to decorate the walls of his villa at Asnières or Pantin.

000 The information we obtained on our journey concerning the manners and customs of the Ticunas is limited to the subjoined details. If we do not preface them with any notice of the antecedents of these natives, it is because the thread which connects their present with their past is too slight to sustain a dissertation.

175 The Ticuna nation, mention of whom occurs as far back as the seventeenth century, occupied, at the time when Pedro Teixeira ascended the river, the space on the left 131 bank comprised between the rivers Ambiacu and Atacoari. On the north its territory 101 was bounded by the Pehua and Yahua Indians; on the east by the Yuris of the river Iça; and on the west by the Orejones of the river Napo. These territorial limits remain still the same, only the numerical strength of the Ticunas is no longer commensurate with the extent of country they formerly occupied. Subjugated, re-subjugated, and catechised in turn by the Portuguese Carmelites and the Spanish Jesuits, who based on the pretensions of their government a claim to the legitimate control of the Ticunas and disputed for possession by force of arms, these natives, already much enfeebled by the contrary influence of the two forces acting upon them during half a century, were repeatedly decimated by the small-pox, that cholera-morbus of the red-skins, which completed the work of the *de Propaganda Fide*. All that now remains of the 161 Ticuna nation forms a population of about one hundred and fifty individuals, all of whom live on the borders of the Atacoari and its two tributaries.¹

609 A very odd custom of the Ticunas is the manner in which they receive individuals 574 of another nation than their own. Hardly has such a visitor appeared on the threshold of their hut, than all the Ticunas who may be present seize their lances and present the point at the individual, under pretence of opposing his entrance. The visitor, who is aware that this is only etiquette, thrusts aside with his hand the weapons directed against him, enters the hut and seats himself on the nearest hammock. The majority 352 of the Ticuna huts are provided, like the Brazilian drawing-rooms in the province of Para, with three or four hammocks slung opposite one another. When each hammock is made to swing by its occupant, either to chase the mosquitoes or to cool the air, and all swing together, passing, repassing, and apparently dodging, without ever coming into collision with each other, one might imagine oneself in a lace manufactory with the interminable motion of the bobbins before one's eyes.

609 The master of the hut then addresses the stranger, and in the hollow ventriloquial 574

¹ We speak of the Ticunas who are living wild, and not of those individuals of the same nation who have settled during the last twenty-five years in several of the villages on the Amazon.

a chief of more or less influence, according to his energy and ambition, 171
and possessing its pajé or medicine man, who fosters its superstitions ;
but they are much more idle and debauched than other Indians belong- 181
ing to the superior tribes. They are not so warlike and loyal as the
Mundurucús, although resembling them in many respects, nor have they
the slender figures, dignified mien, and gentle disposition of the Passés ;
there are, however, no trenchant points of difference to distinguish them
from these highest of all the tribes. Both men and women are tattooed, 304
the pattern being sometimes a scroll on each cheek, but generally rows
of short straight lines on the face. Most of the older people wear brace- 301
lets, anklets, and garters of tapir-hide or tough bark ; in their homes they 291
wear no other dress except on festival days, when they ornament them-
selves with feathers or masked cloaks made of the inner bark of a tree.
They were very shy when I made my first visits to their habitations in
the forest, all scampering off to the thicket when I approached, but on 609 ●
subsequent days they became more familiar, and I found them a harm-
less, good-natured people.

A great part of the horde living at the first Maloca or village dwell in 342
a common habitation, a large oblong hut built and arranged inside with
such a disregard of all symmetry, that it appeared as though constructed 621
by a number of hands, each working independently, stretching a rafter
or fitting in a piece of thatch, without reference to what his fellow-
labourers were doing. The walls as well as the roof are covered with
thatch of palm-leaves ; each piece consisting of leaflets plaited and
attached in a row to a lath many feet in length. Strong upright posts
support the roof, hammöcks being slung between them, leaving a free
space for passage and for fires in the middle, and on one side is an elevated
stage (*girao*) overhead, formed of split palm-stems. The Tucúnas excel 323
most of the other tribes in the manufacture of pottery. They make 415
broad-mouthed jars, for Tucupí sauce, caysúma or mandioca beer,
capable of holding twenty or more gallons, ornamenting them outside
with crossed diagonal streaks of various colours. These jars, with cook-
ing-pots, smaller jars for holding water, blow-pipes, quivers, matirí bags * 352
full of small articles, baskets, skins of animals, and so forth, form the
principal part of the furniture of their huts, both large and small. The
dead bodies of their chiefs are interred, the knees doubled up, in large 766
jars under the floors of their huts.

The semi-religious dances and drinking bouts usual amongst the 273
settled tribes of Amazonian Indians are indulged in to greater excess 535
by the Tucúnas than they are by most other tribes. The Juruparí or 776
Demon is the only superior being they have any conception of, and his
name is mixed up with all their ceremonies, but it is difficult to ascertain
what they consider to be his attributes. He seems to be believed in
simply as a mischievous imp, who is at the bottom of all those mishaps

* These bags are formed of remarkably neat twine made of Bromelia fibres 286
elaborately knitted, all in one piece, with sticks ; a belt of the same material, but more
closely woven, being attached to the top to suspend them by. They afford good
examples of the mechanical ability of these Indians. The Tucúnas also possess the 281
art of skinning and stuffing birds, the handsome kinds of which they sell in great 439
numbers to passing travellers.